

SURVEY OF EDUCATIONAL RADIO PROGRAM DEVICES

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Figuring out a questionnaire which could cover the subject and also yield returns finally resulted in series of questions the answers to which were estimates by those to whom the questionnaires were sent.

The questionnaires were sent to colleges, universities and other publicly owned radio stations. Sixteen of them replied. The material furnished by the sixteen stations, when cast up in tables, is indicative of how educational radio programs are built and which ones are considered to be most effective, but should not be taken as conclusive.

In a glance at the tables, it is seen that a system of points was used to rate the various items. The ratings submitted on the questionnaires were added together for each heading and averages taken. The smaller the figure then, the higher the rank.

The most significant thing brought out in the tabulation is that talks by the persons who wrote them are considered most effective by the stations reporting and are also most widely used. Music, for background, introductions, interludes etc.; playlets are ranked second in effectiveness, but are actually the least frequently used as shown in Table I. This brings up the question propounded in a recent song hit: "What to do about it?" Certainly more than: "Let's put out the lights and go to sleep." Arranging and making use of music and playlets, of course, requires more work and more personnel. The latter item is perhaps the limiting factor in most cases.

The comments of many of those replying to the questionnaires are what make the tabulations valuable. Portions of some of these comments are reproduced below. The portion of the letter reproduced from L. L. Longsdorf, program director of KSAC, Kansas State College, is especially recommended for your perusal. He offers some practical suggestions.

"Although we broadcast from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 hours a day, most of this time is filled with subject matter talks, scheduling some 5,000 talks each year, ranging in length

(more)

from 5 to 20 minutes. That is one reason why we do very little broadcasting of music with the exception of music appreciation for our 4-H Clubs of Kansas and student recitals. We do not have a regularly scheduled program, with but one or two exceptions, where we schedule Department of Music faculty members.

"We have been attempting to improve our programs by instituting the past year two one-act plays, or as you term them, playlets, each week. These are staged by faculty members and students in dramatics.

"I believe our biggest step forward in creating interest is that of setting aside a 20-minute period four days a week in which students enrolled in our elementary as well as advanced radio speaking courses interview specialists on the campus and report on state, national, and international affairs. This proves to be a building block in not only the type of subject matter given and the fact that trained students are giving it but that these students have a large listening audience in their home towns.

"Many of our subject matter talks deal especially with our Extension activities or are centered around local people. By talking up what they are doing, I believe we are assisting to maintain a local listening audience. It is our attempt in these talks, which are used as press articles and radio talks, too, to cover all activities of the state at different times, not confining our stories to any one spot.

"We are finding much interest being taken in broadcasting Extension Schools by a set-up of radio and film strips, synchronized. You are probably familiar with the plan already. This is the basis on which we broadcast experimental programs this past winter, and it has proved most effective. Through our county agents we arrange one or more meeting places in the county. The film strip machine is set up to illustrate the talks as broadcast from our station. We utilize a gong system for warning our county agents when to turn to the next picture. We have had all the way from 17 to as high as 50 counties tuned in to a single program. The attendance at these meetings ranged from 10 to as high as 175 at a meeting.

"The possibilities that were offered in these experimental radio-film strip synchronized programs suggested the possibility of a state-wide general hook-up. So, based on this plan we are broadcasting a two-hour program from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. on June 17 over three of our commercial radio stations, the program being devoted to co-operative marketing. We have three teams in the field at the present time arranging local meetings. We expect 90 counties to participate. The reason for my explanation of this set-up is to show you how we are attempting to, utilize pictures as an effective device in securing a radio audience." L. L. Longsdorf, Program Director, KSAC, Kansas State College.

"Our radio programs are composed almost entirely of talks. We believe that various other devices may be used to advantage where people are employed who can concentrate on the preparation of material. Our broadcasting material is all prepared by agricultural workers who are specialists in subject matter rather than in presentation." E. C. Hollinger, Assistant Director of Extension Service, State College, New Mexico.

"Note that we fail to get the kind of programs we prefer. If possible, we would have the subject matter of all formal talks presented, as dialogues, questions and answers or in short plays." - B. B. Brackett, Director, KUSD, U. of S. D.

"It is difficult to establish a 'ranking' of this sort--each device is effective in its way, when used appropriately, and with good technique. However, I place talks at the head of the list, feeling that the listener desires to hear, in person, the authority for what is being said." W. L. Kadderly, KOAC, Oregon State Agricultural College.

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Table I

Tabulation of Ranking of Devices Most Frequently Used

Station	Talks Interviews	Questions & Answers	Dialogues	Playlets	Plays	Music for Background, etc.
U. of Ill.	1	2	5	3	4	Music used only as incidental
New Mexico S. C.	1		2	3		
U. & S. C. of Florida	1					
Kansas S. C.	1	2	2	3	1	
Cornell U.	1	6	3	5	2	4
U. of S. D.	1		5	3	4	2
U. of Iowa	1	1	2	2	2	3
St. Louis U.	5	2	1		1	
U. of Kansas	1	2	3		4	5
Washington State	1	3	2		4	5
Wis. Crops & Markets	1		2		3	4
Michigan S. C.	1		3	2		
N. D. U.	1				2	1
St. Olaf College	1	2	2	3		
S. D. S. C.	1	4	2	3	6	5
Oregon S. C.	1	5		3	4	2
Total Points	20	29	34	30	37	29
Average	1.65	2.9	2.66	3	3.1	3.61
Rank of frequency of use of devices according to average number of points	1	3	2	4	5	7

SURVEY OF EDUCATIONAL RADIO PROGRAM DEVICES
Tabulation of Ranking of Devices Considered Most Effective

Table II

Station	Talks	Interviews	Questions & Answers	Dialogues	Playlets	Plays	Music for Background, etc.
U. of Ill.	1	2		3	4		
New Mexico S. C.	1		2	3			
U. and S.C. of Florida	1						
Kansas S. C.	1	2	2	3	1		
Cornell U.	1	6	3	5	2		4
U. of S. D.	6	5	4	1	3		2
U. of Iowa	2	1	2	1	1	3	
St. Louis U.	2	3	3		1		1
U. of Kansas	1	1	2				
Washington S. C.	2	1	3	4	1	2	
Wis. Crops & Markets	1		2				
Michigan S. C.	2		3	1			
N. D. U.	1				2		1
St. Olaf College	1	2	1	2			
S. D. S. C.	1	3	2	5	6	7	4
Oregon S. C.	1						2
Total Points	25	26	29	28	21	12	14
Average	1.56	2.6	2.42	2.8	2.33	4	2.33
Rank of devices considered effective as determined by average number of points--	1	5	4	6	2	7	2

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